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The Sino-Soviet Dispute within the World Peace Council

At the Stockholm session of the World Peace Council (16-20 December 1961) lines were again clearly drawn between the Soviets and the Chinese on the organization's program. Basic issues in the Sino-Soviet dispute were involved, and this fact, together with the Soviet anti-Albanian campaign, was brought openly into the World Peace Council dispute by an authoritative article published in the French Communist daily L'Humanite on 28 December.

The long-standing conflict over the program of the peace movement is still based, as it was in 1960, on the Chinese rejection of the CPSU's concept of the proper basis, tactics, and aims of the movement's activity. The CPSU holds that the peace movement should support Soviet foreign policy demands, such as the Soviet position on the German question, on the single premise that war must be averted at all costs. In the CPSU's view the peace movement should characterize the Soviet foreign policy demands as necessary precursors to general and total disarmament, and should praise and publicize the Soviet promise to employ peaceful methods, once these demands have been met, in extending Communist influence throughout the world. The Chinese, on the other hand, hold to their argument that a continuing militant class struggle requires the peace movement to emphasize active support of national liberation movements and the unqualified defense in anti-imperialist terms of the measures taken by the bloc to strengthen its military forces (such as the recent nuclear tests) if the peace movement is not to promote pacifism in the bloc and in Communist parties throughout the world. The speeches of Liao Ch'eng-chih and Liu Ning-i at Stockholm made this position clear.

In the article in the 28 December 1961 issue of Humanite, Raymond Guyot the newly designated "responsable" of the French Communist Party for its national peace offensive, has spelled out and summarized the line that the pro-Soviet Communist parties and their cadres in the peace movement will undoubtedly take on

the results of the WPC's Stockholm session and the program outlined there. It embodies virtually all the main points of an important and comprehensive CPSU condemnation of the Albanians and demand for a simultaneous struggle against the left and the right opportunists in the international Communist movement written by F. Konstantinov and published in Kommunist in the first week of December. This fact suggests that the CPSU will use extensively such indirect attacks by non-Soviet spokesmen against both the Chinese and the right-wing Communist dissidents within the peace movement. An earlier Humanite article (21 December) on the Stockholm meeting only criticized the behavior of the right-wing d'Astier de la Vigerie, who had attacked the USSR for having renewed nuclear testing. The need for the two-front attack presumably was made clear to the PCF in the time between the two articles.

The key argument of Guyot's 28 December article is that the desire for disarmament is the only force that can serve as a basis for achieving world-wide unity among the groups the peace movement is attempting to influence, and the only common interest that can enhance the cooperation the WPC has so far gained in working together with other peace forces. Guyot declares: "It is precisely in order to permit all the forces to express themselves effectively in acting together that the Stockholm delegates retained as their essential theme 'general disarmament.' It is the main slogan of our time, its appeal is universal. It is capable of uniting diverse peoples organizations, movements, personalities, and governments of all continents, anxious to safeguard peace--the most precious blessing of mankind."

By naming the organizations represented at the session--beginning with the Christian Peace Conference headquartered in Prague and including the International Federation of Resistance Fighters, the World Federation of Scientific Workers, the World Federation of Trade Unions, the Women's International Democratic Federation, The Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organization, the World Federation of Democratic Women, the International Union of

Students, and the All African Peoples Conference--Guyot suggests the active role they are likely to play in future Soviet-organized peace unity moves. All but the last named of these organizations are well known, of course, as Communist front organizations, and Communist influence is strongly established in the AAPC. Guyot's failure to mention the absence of representatives of the many anti-atomic-bomb organizations so carefully cultivated by the WPC during the past two years (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, American Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, etc.) which the WPC had announced would be represented, not only conceals a setback to the movement but suggests, since Guyot does not attack those organizations in the article, that they are still prime targets in the unity campaign.

On the subject of Soviet nuclear testing, Guyot repeats the Soviet justification for resuming nuclear testing, quotes Khrushchev, and declares that the WPC understands and approves the USSR's action. It is with this argument that Guyot attacks the right wing of the WPC in the person of d'Astier de la Vigerie, who had earlier figured prominently in a split between the PCF and its allies in the French peace movement. Guyot declares that, when d'Astier contested the reference to testing the Stockholm resolution, insisting that there was no justification for the Soviet resumption of tests, he spoke for himself alone and was completely isolated. Guyot supports this statement by quoting other nominally right-wing figures (Bernal of the UK, Endicott of Canada, and Yasui Kaoru of Japan), who apparently satisfied Soviet requirements at Stockholm by speaking of the small percentage of people in general who blamed the Soviet Union for its actions.

At Stockholm the Chinese-led anti-colonialist delegates (including Albanians, Algerians, Guineans, and a few others so far unidentified) resented the Soviet determination to base the proposed world congress in 1962 upon the sole issue of disarmament, declaring that it should be concerned equally with other aspects of the anti-imperialist peace struggle, such as national liberation, and that preoccupation with disarmament alone would paralyze

peoples struggling for their independence. This fact gave Guyot the opportunity to attack the whole left through a distorted attack on Albania--"some delegates, for example those of Albania, oppose the convocation of a disarmament congress." He justifies this attack in the same terms the Soviets used to justify their attack on Albania at the 22nd CPSU Congress in October, and in doing so Guyot took up a basic issue in the Sino-Soviet dispute.

Guyot argues that these delegates refused to "acknowledge the important changes that have come about in the international situation" and, in effect, to admit that Soviet short-term policies have a chance of success. He draws heavily upon Khrushchev's speeches at the 22nd CPSU Congress, saying, for example, that "for us, war has ceased to be inevitable and the imperialist tiger, while still a tiger, can no longer unleash war with impunity.... The war-mongers fear the socialist giant, his strength, his peace policy, and also the national liberation movements which are turning the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, former reserves of raw materials and soldiers, into independent countries actively taking their place in the struggle for peace."

Here Guyot emphasizes the Soviet concept of the proper role of the national liberation movements and anti-colonial governments, as supporters of Soviet peace policies. He then returns to his main theme, the disarmament campaign, and describes the peace movement as a bridge between the Soviet bloc, the anti-imperialists, and those everywhere who reject Communism for ideological or class reasons. He says that the peace movement "unites men of all opinions, all religions, all social classes, to the other forces for peace." If all these forces work together, the Humanite article asserts "war will not occur and the cause of peaceful coexistence, of general and total disarmament, will advance inexorably." Guyot rejects Liao Ch'eng-chih's charges at Stockholm against right opportunism, saying that "contrary to statements heard, we have no illusions that the war-mongers will voluntarily abandon their weapons. It will be necessary to compel them to do it;" and "the struggle for disarmament is a bitter, difficult fight.... But it is the decisive struggle of our time."

Guyot refers to the other two general resolutions adopted at Stockholm that embodied other major Soviet-supported programs and relates these to the proposal for a disarmament congress. About the first, he says that the struggle for national independence must be supported by the Communist parties and their allies in the major Western countries, and notes that the WPC has decided to support a conference for national sovereignty, national independence, and peace which will bring together representatives from the three continents of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Proposals for such a conference have been made by several front organizations since the beginning of 1961.

The Sino-Soviet differences at Stockholm included a private clash over the site for the three-continent conference. This divergence, which first became apparent at the executive committee meeting of the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organization in Gaza in early December, almost led to blows at Stockholm, where the Soviets suggested that the meeting be convened in Cuba rather than in Africa, as the Chinese had suggested at Gaza. The USSR had apparently outmaneuvered the Chinese at Gaza, for, without agreeing on an African site, she succeeded in getting the AAPSO executive to authorize a consultative meeting of four organizations--the AAPSO, the Latin American Conference for National Sovereignty, the All Africa Peoples Conference, and the Peace Liaison Committee of the Asian and Pacific Regions. Predominant Soviet influence in such a consultative meeting seems assured.

Latin Americans in the World Peace Council have called for a Latin American Peoples Conference, for national sovereignty and non-intervention, to convene in Cuba on 22 January, just prior to the 2nd National Assembly of the Cuban People, 28 January 1962.* This conference is apparently a sequel to the conference convened in Mexico City in March 1961. Since international front leaders from Europe, Africa, and Asia--including the bloc--may also be in Havana for the assembly, it is possible that a call for the three-continent conference will be issued and an international preparatory committee be set up. But the development of the Sino-Soviet dispute may influence the preparations for the three-continent conference, and the Chinese and other Afro-Asian response to any such Latin American initiative cannot be predicted.

*Now postponed to 4 February.

At Stockholm the Chinese tried hard to enlist the support of the Cuban delegates. The Cubans, however, managed to sidestep the Chinese demand by consulting with other Latin American delegates and agreeing that none of them had a mandate that would permit them either to accept or reject the Chinese proposals. Since the end of the Stockholm meeting the Chinese have sent a delegation led by Chu Tzu-chi, their representative on the Cairo secretariat of the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organization, to West Africa, presumably to enlist African support. The delegation went first to Guinea, whose Stockholm delegate, Seydou Diallo, had supported the Chinese position on the disarmament question; but, with Soviet deputy premier Mikoyan also seeking to influence governments and political parties of the area, the Chinese delegation's chances for success are not considered good. It has also been reported that a group of leading French Communists, including a politburo member and a specialist in Afro-Asian affairs, is planning to go to Africa in mid-January. With whatever contacts it may make this group too can be expected to support Soviet views on how the peace struggle should be carried on in Africa.

Guyot points out that the last of the general resolutions at Stockholm dealt with the struggle against German militarism and offered solutions, such as a peace treaty and negotiations on West Berlin, which would contribute to relaxation in Europe, facilitate disarmament, and reduce the danger of war. He adds that only a mass organization advocating these solutions can ward off the danger of war. This call by Guyot for a mass campaign, mainly in Europe, is more than a mere endorsement of the idea that the peace campaign has only to organize and coordinate already existing forces; it encompasses attempts to generate new groups and public concern as well. In October 1961 Guyot had told the PCF Central Committee that, "if one can note in our ranks an under-rating of the danger of war, a state of tranquility which we must break, one can understand that the same type of tendencies exist in the peace movement." Thorez at that time instructed the entire party apparatus to use every form of indoctrination--petitions, strikes, manifestations, meetings, protests against foreign troops and bases, etc.--in defense of peace in order to convince public opinion of the need to struggle for peace. Guyot's treatment of this topic in his 28 December article probably embodies the

conclusions reached at a conference of European Communist parties on problems of European security which was convened in Weimar, East Germany, at the end of November. At present no information is available concerning the events of this meeting.

Guyot, in ending his article, reveals that no real agreement was reached at the Stockholm meeting on the specific plans for the main project of the WPC for 1962. He says that "the convocation of a great world congress by the WPC naturally caused a great deal of discussion as to its character, conception, and preparation." He further shows the fundamental importance of the problems created by the Sino-Soviet dispute to the whole future of the WPC when he says that "these problems, by reason of their importance for the extension, authority, and efficacy of the movement--in a word its entire future--merit further treatment. We will return to that." This statement suggests that a failure to resolve the renewed Sino-Soviet conflict may eventually lead to the dissolution of the peace movement, a possibility that has been reported as imminent on a number of occasions since 1956 and, most recently, in the period just before the Stockholm meeting. For the present, however, the USSR's desire to keep the World Peace Council intact is apparent, both in Soviet action and in Guyot's article.

The Albanian Communists, at least, recognized the significance of the Guyot article, for three days after it appeared they honored it with the same kind of direct attack and refutation that they have otherwise reserved recently for important Soviet attacks. They said Guyot misrepresented their position on the question of the projected disarmament conference, as he indeed did and they rejected his charge that they failed to recognize the changes that had taken place in the international situation, but acknowledged frankly that they had no confidence that the current Soviet policies would succeed. Employing a well-known Chinese argument against these policies, the Albanians stated that it is Guyot and those like him who by their actions promote the very illusions they disclaim in their speeches.